

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete Response to the Office Action dated November 10, 2004, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on February 10, 2005.

Claims 1-24, 50-55, 57, 60-61, and 70-92 remain pending after entry of this response. Claims 35-49, 58-59, and 62-69 have been cancelled, and claims 70-92 have been added. No new matter has been introduced. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed herein.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-24, 35-55, 57-62, and 64-69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kelly*, U.S. Patent No. 3,881,375 in view of *Swoboda*, U.S. Patent No. 3,840,128.

Kelly discloses an apparatus having a tong assembly T supported on a vertical column having a base support. (See, Figure 1; column 2, lns. 47-64). *Swoboda* discloses a racking arm having a pipe gripping head. The racking arm is positioned on the platform 10 between the rotary table 12 and the derrick leg bedplate 30. (See, column 4, lns. 15-17, 24-26). The references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest a mounting assembly coupled to an opposite end of the extendable structure, wherein the mounting assembly is coupled to a support member on a drilling tower, as recited in claim 1.

Also, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest a mounting assembly coupled to an opposite end of the extendable structure, wherein the mounting assembly is adapted to couple the extendable structure to a support beam disposed above a rig floor, as recited in claim 76. Further, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest the support beam is selectively attached to a drilling tower, as recited in claim 77. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest the mounting assembly is clamped to the support beam, as recited in claim 78. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in

combination, teach, show, or suggest the support beam is a convenient beam support, as recited in claim 79. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest the support beam is located between 2 meters and 3 meters above the rig floor, as recited in claim 80.

Further, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest an extendable structure having a variable length and the tong capable of making up or breaking out tubulars attached to one end of the extendable structure and a support beam for coupling the extendable structure to a drilling tower, as recited in claim 50.

Further, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest providing an apparatus for connecting the tubulars, the apparatus comprising a tong adapted to connect the tubulars and an extendable structure for positioning the tong; and positioning the apparatus on a drilling tower, as recited in claim 70.

Further, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest attaching the tong to the extendable structure and positioning the extendable structure on a drilling tower, as recited in claim 83. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest positioning the extendable structure on the drilling tower comprises coupling the extendable structure to a support member on the drilling tower, as recited in claim 84. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest attaching a support member on the drilling tower, and coupling the extendable structure to the support member, as recited in claim 85. Further still, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach, show, or suggest providing a mounting assembly for coupling the extendable structure to the support member, as recited in claim 86.

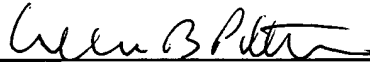
Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the reference cited by the Examiner, does not teach, show, or suggest the apparatus or methods of the present invention.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-24, 50-55, 57, 60-61, and 70-92 are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the same be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



William B. Patterson
Registration No. 34,102
MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant